

Texas Southmost College



Vocational Nursing Program

Student Guide

**Spring 2018**

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## **WELCOME TO THE TSC VOCATIONAL NURSING PROGRAM**

Congratulations on your successful acceptance into the vocational nursing program at Texas Southmost College. The challenges of the vocational nursing program will require unconditional effort on your part and support from your family or significant others. The fast paced program will enrich your mind and change your future as a member of the nursing profession.

The curriculum design will provide you with a well-rounded education that reflects the high level of performance required of the Vocational Nurse in the health care setting. Competence in this profession will develop through diligence, mutual participation and evaluation in the classroom, clinical and simulation laboratory.

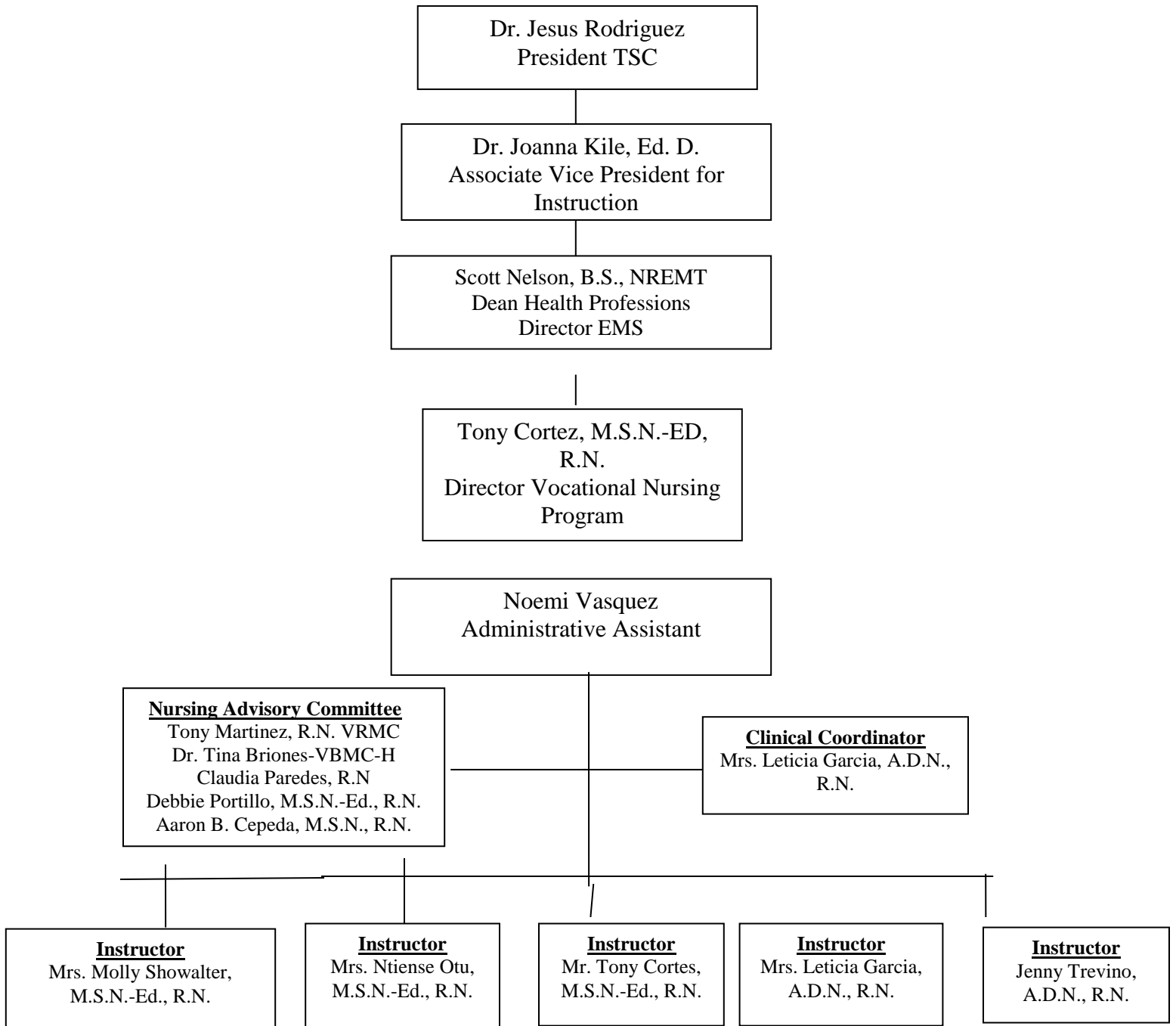
The program will provide you with the instructional guidance and evaluation necessary for progressing through the program year. However, it is important to understand that learning and becoming proficient at skills is the students' responsibility. Your commitment, dedication, determination and consistent effort can lead to a successful and promising future. It is expected and required that all students adhere to the policies outlined within the guide.

You and your success are important to the faculty. We welcome your suggestions in an effort to continue to deliver a historically proven successful program.

We look forward to a very productive and exciting year.

Tony Cortes, M.S.N.-Ed., R.N., C.L.T.C.N.  
Program Director Vocational Nursing Program  
Texas Southmost College

### VN Organizational Chart



**Vocational Nursing Mission Statement**

The Vocational Nursing Program at Texas Southmost College is committed to providing the highest caliber of Vocational Nursing training, commensurate with the mission of the college, which states, *“Transforming our communities through innovative learning opportunities.”*

Additionally, the Vocational Nursing Program is sensitive to the needs of our students and our community. Therefore, the aim is to facilitate an educational access process and academic excellence through a learner-centered, success-oriented nursing program.

## **PHILOSOPHY**

In keeping with the Mission and Philosophy of Texas Southmost College, we, the faculty of the Vocational Nursing program, believe that: **Patients** are persons who are recipients of health care and can be referred to as patients, consumers, clients and/or residents. Patients are integrated biological, psychological, sociological, cultural and spiritual beings. Each Patient has essential human needs that are affected by the internal and external environment. The fulfillment of needs of patients can be threatened by alterations in homeostasis. (Key factors that influence patient's homeostasis with varying degrees include culture, health, and environment.)

**Culture** encompasses all ideas, beliefs, values, attitudes, history, language and other symbols that a group of people possess. From a cultural prospective, wellness, disease and illness are processes in which each individual defines their ability to achieve and maintain holistic health by adapting to his/her environment. Cultural heritage helps to define the individual patient and impacts the delivery of health care to that individual. We foster an appreciation of the unique heritage of the Rio Grande Valley by integrating the concepts of culture into our program.

**Health** is a dynamic continuum of wellness to illness throughout the life span. Patients are encouraged to function at their optimal potential at any given point in the health continuum to maintain balance. The patient's perception of health influences their perception and degree of participation in the effort to restore health status. The well-being of patients and their families is fostered through their caring relationships and interaction with their environment.

**Environment** is considered to be all factors that interact with the individual on an external and internal basis which influence each patient's quality of life. The external factors include the physical entities such as climate, geography, housing, sanitation and air quality, as well as, those structures that are associated with the socialization of a person, which include family and culture.

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Internal influences are the predisposing factors occurring within the mind, body and spirit of an individual.

**Nursing Practice** is an evolutionary process occurring in a variety of settings. This practice integrates patient care into a multi-disciplinary team approach. The caring practitioner is accountable for providing safe, competent and compassionate care utilizing new advances to complement existing nursing practice.

**Nursing Education** provides structured learning opportunities that endeavor to prepare competent graduates for four roles: member of the profession, provider of patient-centered care, patient safety advocate, and member of the health care team. The focus is the patient, the community, and the promotion of health. The environment in which this learning takes place should be representative of the settings wherein vocational nursing is employed. The educational environment should be non-threatening and nurturing to encourage learning, decision-making, and critical thinking skills that meet or exceed program objectives and outcomes. Learning is a life-long process motivated by a need for growth and constant adaptation to new situations.

Vocational Nursing prepares the graduate for entry level employment in the health care arena.

**Caring:** the practice of caring is central to nursing; caring denotes a nurse's responsiveness to a patient's problem; the nurse and the patient collaborate to help the patient gain control, knowledge, and health. Caring integrates biophysical knowledge of human behavior to generate or promote health and to assist those who are ill.

**Patient Safety Advocate:** The caring practitioner promotes safety in the patient and family environment using principles of patient safety, adhering to scope and standards of nursing practice using the parameters of individual knowledge, skills, and abilities, reporting of unsafe practices (actual or potential), and taking steps to prevent harm.

### **Conceptual Framework**

The Vocational Nursing Program Curriculum is based on a conceptual framework which is derived from the faculty's stated philosophy. Currently, this philosophy reflects the Texas Southmost College and the Vocational Nursing mission statement. The Faculty believes in the concept of caring and advocacy for the safety of students in the learning arena. When a conceptual model is used for curriculum construction, it must link the theories about education, the teaching-learning process, and the substantive theoretical content from nursing and adjunctive disciplines. In addition, appropriate empirical indicators, in the form of the actual classroom components, clinical experiences and student assignments are identified. The resulting conceptual-theoretical-empirical system then applies to the patient, the student, and the education. A fully developed conceptual framework represents a particular view of the approach to nursing education. The person becomes the student; the environment becomes the education setting. Health refers to the educational goals, outcomes and processes. Thus the conceptual framework provides the foundation for instruction through the program.

The four inter-related roles of practice have been identified for the Vocational Nursing Graduate: Member of the Profession, Provider of Patient-Centered Care, Patient Safety Advocate, and Member of the Health Care Team. The nursing role defines the scope, limitation, and direction of the Vocational Nurse in the delivery of patient care. Specific competencies referred to as Differentiated Essential Competencies of Graduates of Texas Nursing Programs Evidenced by Knowledge, Clinical Judgments and Behaviors 2010 (DECs) have been identified for the three levels of nursing education: Vocational Nursing (VN), Diploma and Associate Degree Nursing (ADN), and Baccalaureate Degree Nursing Education (BSN). The competencies for the LVN are outlined on the following pages.



**Texas Board of Nursing**  
**Differentiated Essential Competencies (DECs 2010)**

- I. Member of the Profession
  - A. Function within the nurse's legal scope of practice and in accordance with the policies and procedures of the employing health care institution or practice setting.
  - B. Assume responsibility and accountability for the quality of nursing care provided to patients and their families.
  - C. Contribute to activities that promote the development and practice of vocational nursing.
  - D. Demonstrate responsibility for continued competence in nursing practice, and develop insight through reflection, self-analysis, self-care, and lifelong learning.
  
- II. Provider of Patient-Centered Care
  - A. Use clinical reasoning and established evidence-based policies as the basis for decision making in nursing practice.
  - B. Assist in determining the physical and mental health status, needs, and preferences of culturally, ethnically, and socially diverse patients and their families based on interpretation of health-related data.
  - C. Report data to assist in the identification of problems and formulations of goals/ outcomes and patient-centered plans of care in collaboration with patients, their families, and the interdisciplinary health care team.
  - D. Provide safe, compassionate, basic nursing care to assigned patients with predictable health care needs through a supervised, directed scope of practice.
  - E. Implement aspects of the plan of care within legal, ethical, and regulatory parameters and in consideration of patient factors.
  - F. Identify and report alterations in patient responses to therapeutic interventions in comparison to expected outcomes.
  - G. Implement teaching plans for patients and their families with common health problems and well defined health learning needs.
  - H. Assist in the coordination of human, information, and materiel resources in providing care for assigned patients and their families.

III. Patient Safety Advocate

- A. Demonstrate knowledge of the Texas Nursing Practice Act and the Texas Board of Nursing Rules that emphasize safety, as well as all federal, state, and local government and accreditation organization safety requirements and standards.
- B. Implement measures to promote quality and a safe environment for patients, self and others.
- C. Assist in the formulation of goals and outcomes to reduce patient risks.
- D. Obtain instruction, supervision, or training as needed when implementing nursing procedures or practices.
- E. E. Comply with mandatory reporting requirements of the Texas Nursing Practice Act.
- F. Accept and make assignments that take into consideration patient safety and organizational policy.

IV. Member of the Health Care Team

- A. Communicate and collaborate with patients, their families, and the interdisciplinary health care team to assist in the planning, delivery, and coordination of patient-centered care to assigned patients.
- B. Participate as an advocate in activities that focus on improving the health care of patients and their families.
- C. Participate in the identification of patient needs for referral to resources that facilitate continuity of care, and ensure confidentiality.
- D. Communicate and collaborate in a timely manner with members of the interdisciplinary health care team to promote and maintain optimal health status of patients and their families.
- E. Communicate patient data using technology to support decision making to improve patient care.
- F. Assign nursing care to LVNs or unlicensed personnel based upon an analysis of patient or unit need.
- G. Supervise nursing care provided by others for whom the nurse is responsible.

## **The VN Graduate Competencies**

### **Member of the Profession:**

1. Demonstrate accountability for own nursing practice. (MOP K A, B, C, D)
2. Participate in activities that focus on improving the health care of patients. (MOP K B, D)
3. Demonstrate behaviors that promote the development and practice of vocational Nursing. (MOP K C, D)

### **Provider of Patient-Centered Care:**

1. Assist in determining the health status and health needs of the patients, based upon interpretation of health related data, in collaboration with Patients, their families, and other members of the health care team. (POPCC K A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H)
2. Assist in the formulation of goals and a plan of care for the patient in collaboration with the Patient and other members of the health care team. (POPCC II C, E)
3. Implement a plan of care within legal and ethical parameters in collaboration with the Patient and other members of the health care team. (POPCC II E, F)
4. Implement a teaching plan with common health problems and well-defined Learning needs. (POPCC II G)
5. Assist in the evaluation of the individual patient's responses to nursing interventions. (POPCC K C, F)
6. Provide direct basic care to assign multiple patients in structured settings. (POPCC K A, B, D, E, H)
7. Use the problem solving approach as the basis for decision making in nursing practice. (POPCC K A, B, E, H)

**Patient Safety Advocate:**

1. Demonstrate knowledge of the Nursing Practice Act and the Texas Board of Nursing Rules that emphasize safety. (PSA K A, E)
2. Provide a safe environment for patients, self, and others. (PSA K A, B, C, D, E, F)

**Member of the Health Care Team:**

1. Assist in the coordination of human and material resources for the provision of care to assigned patients. (MHCT K A, C, D, E)
2. Collaborate with the Patient and co-workers for the provision of direct care to Assigned patient. (MHCT K A, B, C, D)
3. Participate in the identification of patient needs for referral to appropriate sources of assistance. (MHCT K B, C, D)
4. Participate in activities which support the organizational framework of structured health care settings. (MHCT K C, E, F, G)

### **Program Objectives**

Upon completion of the program, the graduate Vocational Nurse will be able to:

1. Collaborate effectively with patients, families, health care team, and community resources to provide holistic care.
2. Assist in the formulation of a systematic problem-solving approach to deliver basic nursing care to Patients and implement approaches within ethical-legal limitations.
3. Assist in the coordination of patient care as a member of the health care team within the organizational framework of a structured health care setting.
4. Assume responsibility as a member of the nursing profession by demonstrating accountability for practice, promoting the practice of vocational nursing and participating in health promotion.

### **Program Outcomes**

1. Graduates will have a 90% annual pass rate or better on the NCLEX-PN.
2. Attrition rate will be expected to be no more than  
15% at end of Level I  
10% at end of Level II  
5% at end of Level III
3. 80% of employers of graduates will report that graduates were adequately prepared as entry-level practitioners.
4. 80% of graduates will express satisfaction with the program and comfort with their nursing skills.

### **Level I Objectives**

Upon completion of Level I, the student vocational nurse will:

1. Identify the responsibilities, limitations, legal and ethical aspects of nursing care. MOP K A 1a, 2, 3, 4, PSA K A 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6; CJ&B A 1, 2, 3a
2. Identify therapeutic communication skills. POPCC K A 3; POPCC K E 2
3. Utilize structured assessment tools and interviewing techniques from textbooks to take client history. POPCC K A, CJ&B 3; POPCC CJ&B 1, 2, 3

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4. Identify and employ components of the nursing process. POPCC K A 1, CJ&B 1, POPCC K B 1, POPCC E K 12
5. Perform basic nursing skills observing appropriate principles as presented in the skills laboratory. MOP B K 3, CJ&B 2a, POPCC K D 1a, 1b, MOP A CJ&B 3a, PSA B CJ&B 3a
6. Provide basic nursing care to a primary client. MOP A CJ&B 1, 2, MOP B CJ&B 3a
7. Recognize the role of a vocational nurse as a member of the health care team. MHCT K A 3b; MHCT D CJ&B 2, 3
8. Identify techniques to improve own nursing practice. MOP B K 5, MOP B CJ&B 4
9. Identify local community resources that can assist in meeting client needs. MHCT CJ&B B 5, MHCT C CJ&B 1a, 1b
10. (a) Identify the distinct and unique characteristics of a geriatric client based on physical, mental, and emotional developmental process. POPCC C K 4, POPCC CJ&B 3, PSA B K 1, 2  
(b) Compare and contrast normal aging changes with pathological processes. POCC B CJ&B 7

**Level II Objectives**

Upon completion of Level II, the student vocational nurse will:

1. Develop the responsibilities, limitations, legal and ethical aspects of nursing care with minimal assistance. MOP K A 2, A 3, A 4, CJ&B A 1, 2, MOP K 3, MOP CJ&B 2a
2. Incorporate therapeutic communication skills in caring for a client and family. POPCC E K 2, MHCT A K 2, MHCT C 4b
3. Perform and document assessments using a systematic approach with minimal assistance from the instructor. POPCC K C 2, E 2, POPCC CJ&B A 3, E 8, 9

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4. Develop the skill to prioritize and implement components of the nursing process utilizing a holistic approach in delivery of client care. POPCC K C 5, 6, D 3a, 3b, POPCC CJ&B C 2
5. Perform basic and advanced nursing skills observing appropriate principles as presented in skills laboratory. PSA CJ&B 3a, 3b, MHCT CJ&B B 3
6. Perform basic and advanced nursing care to a primary and secondary client. PSA CJ&B 3a, 3b, MHCT CJ&B B 3
7. Work cooperatively with other members of the health care team in meeting client's health care needs. MHCT K A 1a, 1b, 3b, 4a, 4b, MHCT CJ&B A 1
8. Use self evaluation process to improve own nursing practice. MOP K B 4, B 4, 7a, 7b, 7c, MOP CJ&B B 4
9. Recognize the need for client referral to community resources. PSA K A 3
10. (a) Identify the distinct and unique characteristics of a pediatric client based on physical, mental, and emotional developmental processes. MOP CJ&B B 3a, 3b, 3c, POPCC CJ&B B 9  
(b) Compare and contrast hospitalization treatment modalities of pediatric clients to the adult counterpart. POPCC K A 3  
(c) Observe and participate in the care of the mother and family during ante partum, intrapartum, and postpartum phase. POPCC K A 3  
(d) Administer medication to selected clients safely by observing the six rights of medication administration. MOB CJ &B B 3a, 3b, 3c  
(e) Demonstrate behaviors which promote a positive image of vocational nursing. MOP K B 7a, 7b, MOP CJ&B B 8

**Level III Objectives**

Upon completion of Level III, the student vocational nurse will:

1. Provide nursing care that reflects responsibilities, limitations, legal and ethical aspects of nursing practice. MOP K 1a, 1b, 1c, CJ&B 1, 2, 3, 4, POPCC K E3, E8, E9, CJ&B E8, PSA K A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, A6, CJ&B 3, 4, 5, K B 2
2. Utilize therapeutic communication effectively in caring for clients and family. MHCT K F 2, 3a, 4a, CJ&B 1, 2, 3, MHCT K B 1a,1b, MHCT K D 1, MHCT CJ&B 1a
3. Perform and document client assessments using a systematic approach. POPCC K B1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, CJ&B 1, 2, 3, 4,5, 6, 7, 8
4. Utilize the nursing process to provide holistic client care. POPCC K D 1a, 1b, 1c, 1d
5. Perform requisite nursing skills safely and effectively. PSA B K 1, 2, 3, 4, CJ&B 1, 2, 3a, 3b, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, C K 1, 2, CJ&B1, 2, 3, D CJ&B 1, 2, 3
6. Provide organized nursing care to multiple clients. POPCC C CJ&B 1, 2, 3, 4, MHCT A K 1a, 1b, 2, 3a, 3b, 4a, 4b, 5, CJ&B 1, 2, 3
7. Work collegially with members of the health care team in meeting client's health care needs. POPCC C CJ&B 1, 2, 3, 4, MHCT A K 1a, 1b, 2, 3a, 3b, 4a, 4b, 5, CJ&B 1, 2, 3
8. Evaluate professional accountability during transition process from student to graduate vocational nurse. MOP K A 1a, 1b, 1c, 2, 3, 4, CJ&B 1, 2, 3, 4, MOP B K 1a, 1b, 1c, 1d, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7a,7b, 7c, 8, CJ&B 1, 2a, 2b, 3a, 3b, 3C, 4, 5a, 5b, 6a, 6b, 6c, 7, 8,
9. Participate in client referral process to community resources. POPCC K A CJ&B 1, 2a, 2b, 3, 4, MHCT A CJ&B 1, 2
10. Deliver nursing care to meet the total needs of the client throughout the life cycle including biological, spiritual and cultural aspects for the promotion, maintenance and/or restoration of health at any point along the health continuum. POPCC C K 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 CJ&B 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7



11. Recognize roles of vocational nursing organizations, regulatory agencies and organizational committees. MOP K A 1a, 1b, 1c, 2, 3, 4 CJ&B 4, 5

### **VN Program Course Descriptions**

VNSG 1226 – Gerontology: Lec. 2, Cr 2

This course offers an overview of the normal physical, psychosocial, and cultural aspects of the aging process. This course addresses common disease processes of aging and offers exploration of attitudes toward care of the older adult. Co-requisite: VNSG 1160.

VNSG 1304 - Foundations of Nursing: Lec. 3, Cr. 3

This course offers an introduction to the nursing profession including history, standards of practice, legal and ethical issues, and the role of the vocational nurse. Covered topics include mental health, therapeutic communication, cultural and spiritual diversity, nursing process, and holistic awareness.

VNSG 1402 - Applied Nursing Skills I: Lec. 2, Cr. 4, Lab 7

This course offers an introduction to and application of primary nursing skills. The course emphasis on utilization of nursing process and related scientific principles of safety, body mechanics, infection-control, asepsis and sterile technique. Co-requisite: VNSG 1260

VNSG 1260 - Clinical I: Cr. 2

This course offers a health-related work based learning experience that enables the student to apply specialized occupational theory, skills and concepts. Direct supervision is provided by the clinical professional. Co-requisite: VNSG 1402 & VNSG 1226.

VNSG 1331 – Pharmacology: Lec. 3, Cr. 2

This course offers fundamentals of medication and their diagnostic, therapeutic, and curative effects and includes nursing interventions utilizing the nursing process. This course offers an overview of general principles of medication administration including determination of dosage, preparation, safe administration, and documentation of multiple forms of drugs. Instruction includes various systems of measurement.

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VNSG 1330 - Maternal-Neonatal Nursing: Lec.3, Cr. 3

This course incorporates utilization of the nursing process in the assessment and management of the childbearing family with emphasis on the bio-psycho-socio-cultural needs of the family during the phases of pregnancy, childbirth, and the neonatal period including abnormal conditions. Co-requisite: VNSG 1161.

VNSG 1161 - Clinical II: Cr. 1

This course offers a health-related work based learning experience that enables the student to apply specialized occupational theory, skills and concepts. Direct supervision is provided by the clinical professional. Co-requisite: VNSG 1330.

VNSG 1234 – Pediatrics: Lec. 3, Cr. 3

This course offers a study of childhood diseases and childcare from infancy through adolescence incorporating basic aspects of normal growth and development. Focus on the care of the well and ill child utilizing the nursing process. Co-requisite: VNSG 1162.

VNSG 1162 - Clinical III: Cr. 1

This course offers a health-related work based learning experience that enables the student to apply specialized occupational theory, skills and concepts. Direct supervision is provided by the clinical professional. Co-requisite: VNSG 1234.

VNSG 1329 - Medical/Surgical Nursing Me: Lec. 4 Cr. 4

This course covers the application of the nursing process to the care of adult patients experiencing medical-surgical conditions in the health-illness continuum in a variety of health care settings. Co-requisite: VNSG 2261.

VNSG 2261 - Clinical IV: Cr. 2

This course offers a health-related work based learning experience that enables the student to apply specialized occupational theory, skills and concepts. Direct supervision is provided by the clinical professional. Co-requisite: VNSG 1329.

VNSG 1332 - Medical/Surgical Nursing II:

Lec. 4, Cr. 4

This course is a continuation of Medical-Surgical Nursing I with application of the nursing process to the care of adult patients experiencing medical-surgical conditions in the health-illness continuum in a variety of health care settings. Co-requisite: VNSG 2262.

VNSG 2262 - Clinical V: Cr. 2

This course offers a health-related work based learning experience that enables the student to apply specialized occupational theory, skills and concepts. Direct supervision is provided by the clinical professional. Co-requisite: VNSG 1332.

VNSG 1238 - Mental Illness: Lec. 2, Cr. 2

Study of human behavior: With emphasis on emotional and mental abnormalities and mode of treatment incorporating the nursing process.

VNSG 1119 – Leadership and Professional Development: Lec.1, Cr.1

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This course offers a study of the importance of professional growth. Covered topics include the role of the licensed vocational nurse in the multi disciplinary health care team, professional organizations and continuing education.

## Academic Policies and Procedures

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### **Academic Other Than Grade Appeals or Non – Academic**

In attempting to resolve any student grievance, other than academic standards the student shall first make a serious effort to resolve the matter with the individual with whom the grievance originated. Non-academic grievances are appealed in a timely manner to the Program Director, Dean of the Health Care Career and Technical Division, or Associate Vice President for Instruction, when appropriate. All grievance communication must be submitted in writing. If the matter remains unsolved after exercising all options, the student may make a final appeal to the President.

### **Admissions Policies**

The Vocational Nursing Program has established its admissions policies in accordance with institutional policy, Texas State Board of Nursing “Minimum Standards” and program based policies. The admission policies are as follows:

#### **Criteria for Admission in VN Program**

1. Meet general TSC admission requirements. (Available in the Office of the registrar.)
2. Students must take and pass the following prerequisite courses to be eligible for consideration into the VN Program:
  - HPRS 1101 Introduction to Health Professions (B or Better)
  - HPRS 1106 Medical Terminology (B or Better)
  - HPRS 1204 Basic Health Professions Skills Lab (B or Better)
  - BIOL 2301 Anatomy and Physiology I (B or Better)
  - BIOL 2302 Anatomy and Physiology II (B or Better)
3. All Prerequisite coursework must be completed by application deadline. If in- progress, courses must be successfully completed and certifications issued by beginning of 1<sup>st</sup> semester in the program.
4. Pre-entrance testing as required by the Texas Board of Nursing. TSC VN Program requires successful completion of the
  - a. HESI Pre-entrance exam: A grade  $\geq 70\%$  is required in the following four sections: Mathematics, Science, Reading, and Writing. An overall cumulative score of  $\geq 75\%$  is required. However, a passing grade does not assure your entrance into the VN Program. Only the top scorers will be admitted.
5. Application to the Vocational Nursing Program, completed in its entirety.
6. A complete and current Vocational Nursing Program Immunization Record must be submitted with the application.
7. Mandatory attendance to the Skills for Academic Nursing Success (SANS) workshop and program orientation at the scheduled time and prior to starting classes.
8. Once accepted, the department Administrative Assistant (A.A.) will register you for classes in accordance with the College schedule.

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9. Payment of all fees, tuition, and liability insurance premium is the responsibility of the student.
10. All students must clear a criminal background (security clearance) and drug screen check.
11. All documents submitted become property of the College upon receipt. All information contained in the application is to be true and correct. Any misrepresentation of the facts will make the applicant ineligible for admission.

**Assignments/Test/Quizzes**

Homework is assigned to guide, enhance, and reinforce student learning and is not considered a “cushion” to improve a course average. Homework is considered a vital part of student learning.

Written assignments for classroom as well as clinical reports, nursing care plans, and case studies will be required at the appointed time. Failure to comply will result in academic counseling that could culminate in suspension and/or withdrawal.

**It is the instructor’s prerogative to refuse late or poorly presented work.** Refer to individual course syllabi for guidelines for testing, assignments, and homework. All materials handed in for evaluation should be properly identified with Student’s Name, Course Title, Date, and Instructor’s Name.

Some faculty may want to review test with students. Score sheets of evaluated test results may be returned for the students to review and initial the grade. **THERE IS NO COPYING OF INFORMATION FROM THE TEST ITSELF.** All test and score sheets become school property after the student reviews and initials the grade.

**Attendance Policy**

The student is expected to attend classes, field trips, school programs, and clinical rotations as assigned. Students are responsible for their own transportation and expenses including liability.

**MAXIMUM ABSENCES:    Full time    Part time**

Fall Semester	2 Days	1 Day
Spring semester	2 Days	1 Day
Summer Session I	1 Day	1 Day
Summer Session II	1 Day	1 Day

- *Any tardy over 30 minutes will be counted as 1 full day.*
- *No half day absences*

A student who cannot report for class must call both the instructor and the school to report the absence before class arrival time for each occurrence. A student who cannot report for clinical must call the instructor, the school and the clinical facility to report the absence before clinical arrival time. Failure to do so will result in a “no call no show”. See no call no show policy for consequences of such actions.

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Absences are reserved for personal illness or extreme emergency only. Students should refrain from being absent in clinical, as this makes it difficult for them to meet clinical objectives and for faculty to evaluate whether a student has met clinical objectives. Students risk failing clinical rotations as a result of being absent. Any clinical absences

Students who exceed maximum absences will be dis-enrolled, and follow the administrative withdrawal procedure.

The office number: (956) 295-3576. Voice mail is on after hours. **LEAVE A MESSAGE** that states your name, the name of the instructor, class, and or clinical level, for which you are calling in absent.

Instructors will give students a number or numbers where they can be reached in syllabi. If you are not able to reach your instructor you are still responsible for calling the office to report your absence. Doctor's excuse: An excuse from a physician **MAY BE REQUIRED** if the student is absent on the day of a major exam or event. A doctor's clearance may also be required any time at the discretion of the instructor or the Program Director.

### **Extreme Emergencies**

Extreme Emergencies will be addressed and assessed by the VN Program Director in the event of excess absences.

### **Tardiness**

A tardy is defined as any arrival that is 1 minute up to 30 minutes after scheduled time for class/clinical or any leaving class/clinical 30 minutes prior to dismissal. When reporting late, it is the student's responsibility to notify the appropriate person or persons. **(THREE TARDIES CONSTITUTE ONE ABSENCE)**

### **No Call/No Show**

A No Call/No Show is failure to notify instructor, hospital, or school office about absence or tardy before assigned time will be considered a **"NO CALL, NO SHOW."** \*\*\*NOTE: Call In's will NOT be accepted via a classmate.

**"NO CALL, NO SHOW"** occurrence -in classroom or clinical will result in:

- 1st occurrence Disciplinary Action Form
- 2nd occurrence Probation Action Form
- 3rd occurrence Dis-enrollment from the Program

### **Vacation and Holidays**

Students shall be allocated at least 18 days for vacation and/or holidays during the course of the twelve months. All scheduled holidays are to be observed as designated by the university and the Vocational Nursing program; as relevant to the Texas State Board of Nursing requirements. The scheduled holidays and vacation will be uniform for all students. You will find these posted on the curriculum schedule.



### **Bereavement Policy**

Students will be allowed to take 3 bereavement days off **ABOVE AND BEYOND THE REGULAR ATTENDANCE POLICY** only with the occurrence of a death within the immediate family of the student. Immediate family members include **ONLY**: child, spouse, mother, father, grandmother, grandfather, brother and sister. In the case of other relatives, 1 day may be taken above and beyond the regular absence. Make up time will be reviewed and assessed on an individual basis. For all other persons if available, your absences days should be taken. **At no time may a student exceed 3 bereavement days. Written validation/funeral excuse will be required. Discretion should be exercised when using bereavement leave.**

### **Communication with Students**

Program communication with students will occur via email. Students are required to have up to date emails on file with office staff. **All correspondence shall be through TSC email addresses. Pearson Learning System (similar to Blackboard) is used by a majority of faculty and should be monitored by students regularly for information updates.**

## **Statement on Security and Drug Screens for Students Applying to the Vocational Nursing Program**

This statement is issued to advise you of a new requirement that may affect your acceptance into Programs within the TSC Vocational Nursing Program.

- 1. All students accepted into the VN program will be required to clear a Security screening.**
- 2. Students will only have conditional acceptance into the Vocational Nursing program until they have cleared a Security screening.**

\* Please see program director for more information.

## **Texas Southmost College Vocational Nursing Program Policy on Security Screenings of Students**

Texas Southmost College Department of Vocational Nursing adheres to the policies of all clinical facilities with which the department is affiliated for student clinical learning experiences. Many clinical facilities and school districts require Security and Drug Screening of all students.

### **Purpose**

Clinical agencies used by the TSC stipulate in the clinical affiliation agreements that students' criminal background be prescreened before they are permitted into the clinical facility. This prescreening requirements is the same as that required of employees of public and private clinical agencies. The rationale for this requirement for clinical students is based on the concept of due diligence and competency assessment of all individuals whose assignments bring them in

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contact with patients and employees. Competency assessment extend beyond technical skills to include an individual's past behavior as indicated by their criminal history. This approach ensures uniform compliance with Joint Commission standards pertaining to human resource management. Please note successful completion of a background check DOES NOT guarantee licensure or employment after graduation. Full acceptance into the nursing program is contingent upon satisfactory results.

### **Applicability**

This policy is effective May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016 for all applicants for the spring 2016 semester and thereafter. All Security Screening will be conducted as a condition of full acceptance into TSC nursing program. Verification must be received from the designated company prior to being fully admitted to the nursing program. The results will be accepted for the duration of the student's enrollment in the nursing program if the participating student has not had a break in the nursing program and if the student has had no convictions while enrolled. A break in enrollment is defined as nonattendance of one full semester or more. Attendance must be verifiable through the university.

The Vocational Nursing program will forward student information to the Board of Nursing to do the Security/Criminal Background Screening. The Vocational Nursing Program will not accept Security Screening results from any company other than the one designated by the Texas Board of Nursing. Drug screen will be by the laboratory that the program uses.

### **Allocation of Cost**

Cost of the Security and Drug Screening will be the responsibility for any students beginning Nursing Programs in May 2015, and thereafter. **The student will pay the cost of the Security Screening and drug screening at the time of the screening. The cost is non-refundable.**

### **Type of Screen**

Security Screenings will be performed by the Texas Board of Nursing and will review the student's criminal history. The check should include the cities and counties of all known residences. Security Screenings must include a person's criminal history for seven years prior to the date of application. This includes FBI records and the following histories will disqualify an individual from consideration for admission in the nursing program:

1. Registered sex offenders
2. Health and Human Services – Office of Inspector General list of excluded individuals, U.S. General Services Administration excluded parties list, Employee Misconduct Registry, U.S. Treasury - Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) List of Specially Designated Nationals (SDN), Texas Health and Human Services Commission, excluded providers in Medicaid and Title XX provider exclusion data.
3. Felony convictions
4. Felony deferred adjudications involving crimes against persons (physical or sexual abuse)
5. Misdemeanor convictions/deferred adjudication or felony convictions/deferred Adjudications involving crimes against persons;

6. Misdemeanor convictions/deferred adjudication related to moral turpitude
7. Misdemeanor/felony convictions/deferred adjudications for the sale, possession, Distribution, or transfer of narcotics or controlled substances;

Individuals with any of the above histories will not be eligible to enroll in the nursing program, and if the history is discovered or a conviction occurs after enrollment, the student will be required to withdraw from the program. A student who is convicted of a criminal offense while enrolled in the program must report the conviction to the Program director within three days of the conviction. The term conviction for these purposes includes probated sentences and deferred adjudications. When in doubt-report!

### **Process**

Upon being given “conditional acceptance”,

1. Students will be listed on a roster submitted to the Texas Board of Nursing. The student will be responsible for any costs associated with the investigation of criminal backgrounds.
2. The Board of Nursing will inform the Program Director/ or designated staff of each program involved the student applicant of results within 30 days.
3. All students receiving a “clear” report will be admitted into the program. The student will need to provide the school with a copy of the “blue card” they receive from the Board of Nursing at their home address. Students who have to fill out a declaratory order must keep the school informed and provide copies of all papers they receive from the Board of Nursing regarding their case.
4. All students not receiving a “clear” report will have their record “flagged” by the PD/staff and sent to the Program Director for review.
5. The Program Director will review all students having other than a “clear” background check, and determine if the student will be permitted to train at contractual clinical facilities.
6. Within 10 working days, the Program Director will return report of those students to the Dean of the programs involved, indicating which students were and were not accepted for hospital training.
7. The Program Director will notify all cleared students that they will be enrolled in the program. The Program Director will inform the specific students not cleared, that they will have their conditional acceptance rescinded. Students having concerns about the accuracy of the CBC report will be directed to the CBC agency for appeal and resolution. If resolution occurs students may reapply to enter the next class or next year.
8. The Program Directors will fill the open positions as soon as possible with regard to the procedures defined for their individual programs.

### **Compliance and Record Keeping**

- The Board of Nursing will notify TSC (Program Director) of all individuals who fail a Security Screening.
- Verification sent by the Board of Nursing to TSC will include only the student’s name and social security number.
- Program Director will notify student that their admittance has been revoked.

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- The TSC Department of Nursing will send verification on adherence to the policy to the clinical affiliate prior to the clinical rotation start date. Verification is accomplished by sending a letter from the Vocational Nursing Program on letterhead stating that these standards have been met by the student, listing the student's full name and clinical rotation start date. If more than one student is attending a clinical rotation, a comprehensive list with all of the student's names may be submitted.

Verification information will be filed in a secured area to ensure confidentiality. In the event that the student feels that an error has been made in the results of the Security Screening, it is the responsibility of the student to contact the external vendor for a verification check and the student is responsible for any cost associated with this check. Other than error relative to identify, there will be no appeal of this policy.

### **Declaratory Order**

A student who does not clear the security screen, may go through the declaratory process with the Board of Nurse Examiners. If the Student clears this process and is deemed eligible to sit for state licensure, the student may re-apply to the program of choice.

[http://www.bne.state.tx.us/forms\\_declaratory\\_order.asp](http://www.bne.state.tx.us/forms_declaratory_order.asp)

### **Disclaimers**

- Successful completion of a Security screening for a Vocational Nursing Program does not ensure eligibility for licensure or future employment.
- Clinical agencies can establish more stringent standards, if they so desire, to meet regulatory requirements for their facility.
- Clinical agencies can conduct additional background checks at their discretion.

If a student is found to be ineligible for clinical placement any time during the program, the student is unable to meet clinical learning objectives and will be withdrawn pending resolution of the situation

### **Drug Screening Policy**

#### **Policy**

In order to uphold the highest standards of the nursing profession, the Vocational Nursing Program has adopted a drug-free environment. As a condition of admission to any nursing program, each student will be required to submit to a Preadmission drug test, and to submit, as requested, to additional tests once enrolled in the nursing program.

Additionally, any student suspected of being under the influence of alcohol or drugs will be required to submit to an immediate substance screening, as a condition of remaining in the program.

## **Applicability**

This policy is effective May 15, 2017 for all applicants for all the future semesters and thereafter. All drug screening will be conducted as a condition of full acceptance into a TSC nursing program. The results will be accepted for the duration of the student's enrollment in the nursing program if the participating student has not had a break in the nursing program and if the student has had no drug screen for cause while enrolled. A break in enrollment is defined as nonattendance of one full semester or more. Attendance must be verifiable through the college.

## **Preadmission Screening**

### **Procedure**

1. In the letter of conditional acceptance, the procedure for drug testing will notify students.
2. Students will only have conditional acceptance into the Vocational Nursing program until they have a negative urine drug screen.
3. Students are required to sign the Drug Testing Waiver Agreement prior to having the drug screen.
4. Students will be required to follow the procedures established by the College and should not obtain a drug test prior to being notified.
5. All costs associated with testing are the responsibility of the student.
6. The TSC will contract out test using established methods and procedures.
7. Confidentiality of the student as well as the integrity of the urine sample will be protected.
8. The procedure for collection, as determined by the agency, will involve a witness to the voiding of the urine sample, securable urine containers, and chain of custody procedures.
9. The urine sample will be screened for drugs. If any of the drugs listed in Exhibit A (attached hereto) are found, the drug test is presumed positive. A second test from the original urine sample will confirm presumed positives results. If the second test is positive, the available evidence, including health history, will be used to determine the presence or absence of drug abuse.
10. The contract agency will notify the program director of all test results.

## **Positive Results or Refusal to Test**

If the student has a positive drug screen or refuses to have a drug screen,

- He/she will have their conditional acceptance rescinded.
- Will be required to immediately withdraw from the nursing program. The student will then be required to complete, at the student's cost, chemical dependency evaluation and treatment, if recommended by the drug assessment. The chemical dependency evaluation must be by a provider approved by the Vocational Nursing Program. Any student in the program with a positive drug screen shall be suspended for a minimum of one calendar year from all coursework with the stipulation that the student receive and show proof of treatment to the Director of the Program.

**Random drug screening will be required as a component of the recovering process by the agency providing treatment with results conveyed to the Director of the Program.** Only with documentation of successful treatment after the minimum one calendar year suspension will

the student be considered for readmission on a space available basis. Prior to readmission to the Vocational Nursing Program, the student must be retested by a TSC approved laboratory and have a negative drug screen. Testing is done at student expense. If the drug screen is Positive this will result in permanent ineligibility for readmission. After readmission the student must submit to random drug screens as request by the Vocational Nursing Program. A positive drug screen will result in permanent dismissal and ineligibility for readmission into the program.

Sec. 301.404 Duty of Nursing Educational Program to Report

(a) In this section, “nursing educational program” and “nursing student” have the meanings assigned by Section 301.402(a)

(b) **A nursing educational program that has reasonable cause to suspect that the ability of a nursing student to perform the services of the nursing profession would be, or would reasonable be expected to be, impaired by chemical dependency shall file with the Board a written, signed report that includes the identity of the student and any additional information the Board requires.**

**For Cause**

The Vocational Nursing program maintains a drug-free environment. Random drug and alcohol testing is conducted. Additionally, any nursing student who demonstrates behavioral changes **suspected to be related to the use of drugs or alcohol will be subjected to testing.** The nursing faculty member’s decision to refer a student for drug testing will be based on, but not limited to:

- observable phenomena such as direct observation of drug use and or physical symptoms or manifestations of being under the influence of a drug
- erratic behavior, slurred speech, staggered gait, flushed face, dilated/pinpoint pupils, wide mood swings, and deterioration of work performance
- information that a student has caused or contributed to an accident that resulted in injury requiring treatment by a licensed health care professional
- Conviction by a court, or being found guilty of a drug, alcohol or controlled substance.

Testing will be conducted using the following policy/procedure

1. The faculty member will have another faculty member or licensed health care professional confirm the suspicious behavior. If a preceptor reports behavioral changes, the faculty will ask the preceptor to have another licensed health care professional confirm the behavior.
2. The student will be asked to leave the area and go with a faculty member and a witness (as defined above) to discuss the situation in a location ensuring privacy and confidentiality. The discussion will be documented, and the decision to refer for drug testing will be made. In the case of a practicum situation, faculty may visit the site or confer by phone with the student. A witness should be included in the phone conference.
3. If the decision is to refer the student for drug testing, the student should be instructed on Where and when to report for testing: The student will be required to report to the Contracted agency immediately for testing or a time frame not to exceed 24 hours.
4. The faculty member notifies the Program director of the referral.
5. The student will be suspended from all class/clinical activity until the case has been reviewed by the Dean’s office. If the drug/alcohol screen is negative, the Program

Director will notify the faculty to readmit the student to the course without penalty. If the test is positive the student will be dismissed from the program.

### **Catastrophic illness**

In the event of a catastrophic illness or injury, or debilitating illness, injury or pregnancy, the student may be allowed to withdraw from the program without academic penalty. Proper physician documentation will be required.

### **Classroom Breaks**

The instructor will designate the dismissal time for a break during lecture hours. The break may be used to make phone calls, restroom break or to eat a snack. **Returning from break tardy or absent will be handled with the same consequence as specified in the attendance policy section.** You may snack in the classroom only during the break and never during a lecture at the discretion of the instructor. You are responsible for picking up food items, soda cans, etc. Privileges may be revoked if there is consistent disregard in maintaining the classroom in order.

### **Change of Name/Address/Telephone/Email**

Record of students' names and address are based upon application for admissions. Subsequent Changes of Name or Address should promptly be reported to the Enrollment Office and School Office. Students wishing to permanently change their name on their permanent academic records must show proper documentation. You must keep the Vocational Nursing main office informed of any address/ phone number/ email address change immediately upon change. All email communication will be sent via the tsc.edu address only.

### **Delinquent Student Loans**

Students who have delinquent student loans will not be allowed to renew their license unless a payment plan has been worked out with the lending agency.

### **Dress Code**

Students are professionals in training, therefore they should maintain a professional appearance at all times. **Street clothes ARE NOT ALLOWED for class/clinical. Clothing that is revealing or suggestive in any way will not be permitted. T-Shirts with obscenities or lewd remarks are prohibited. In clinical and skills lab students will wear uniforms to maintain a professional environment. White undergarments will be worn under the white uniform.** The pants will be blue and the top is white. ***NO OTHER COLOR UNDERGARMENT IS ACCEPTABLE. STUDENTS WHO DO NOT COMPLY WITH THIS SECTION WILL BE SENT HOME TO CHANGE UNDERGARMENTS; AT THE RISK OF HAVING POINTS DEDUCTED.***

### **Grading System**

In accordance with current program policy, a final course grade of **75** or better is required to pass this course.

**Conversion of numerical to letter grade are as follows:**

**Alphanumeric Grading System**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Explanation</b>	<b>Quality Points per Semester</b>
A	90-100	4.00
B	80-89.99	3.00
C	70-79.99	2.00
D	60-69.99	1.00
F	Below 60	0.00

Please note rounding or curving of grades will not be possible. Whatever grade is earned is the grade the student will receive.

Grades lower than 75 will be reflected on the transcript but are not considered passing in the vocational nursing program. The student will need to retake the course if grade is lower than 75. Approved 7/17/2015.

**Graduation Requirements**

Pinning ceremonies are held at the end of your third level and final semester. Students are also responsible for turning in all Skills Checklist and required school work to the department and graduation applications to the University to receive their Certificates of Proficiency. Deadlines will be announced. Students have not completed the program until they have officially attended the graduation commencement ceremonies and pinning ceremony, and are still responsible to attend all scheduled days after regular class and clinical schedules have been completed.

**Grievances/Grade Appeal**

Course grade grievances must be initiated by contacting the instructor or individual with whom the grievance arose within 30 days. An effort to resolve the matter informally should be made. If the student is not satisfied with the decision, the student may appeal in writing within 21 days to the program director of the department from which the grade was issued. Disputes not satisfactorily resolved within 21 days may be appealed in writing to the College Dean who will render the final decision.

**International Students**

Prior to beginning the admission process, an international student must meet with

- The program director
- International student office

**Jury Duty**

Students who receive a jury summons must notify the program director immediately. The program director will then issue the student a letter explaining the Vocational Nursing Program's attendance policy in an effort to excuse the student from jury duty. If the court does not excuse the student, arrangements for the student to make up clinical hours will be considered on an individual basis.



### **Jurisprudence Exam**

All applicants must pass the Texas nursing jurisprudence examination prior to being issued a permanent license. The examination is based on the Texas Nursing Practice Act (NPA) and the Texas Board of Nursing Rules and Regulations. The nursing jurisprudence examination has no affect on taking the NCLEX. It is a separate requirement and only affects your ability to receive a permanent license. However, as part of VNSG 1119 (Leadership & Professional Development), the Jurisprudence Exam will be used as a grade; in order to fulfill class requirements. However, as part of VNSG 1119, your Jurisprudence Exam will be used as a grade; in order to fulfill requirements for VNSG 1119 Leadership and Professional Development.

### **Jurisprudence Examination Instructions**

1. After an applicant has filed an examination application with the Texas Board of Nursing (TBON) **90 to 120 days prior to graduation**. They will be provided a web address to access the jurisprudence examination. Follow the instructions to log on and complete the examination.
2. Applicants can download a copy of the NPA and Board Rules and Regulations from the board's website by going to [www.bon.state.tx.us](http://www.bon.state.tx.us) and clicking on "Nursing Law and Rules".
3. An online jurisprudence prep course is available on the Board's web site <http://www.bon.state.tx.us/olv/je-course.html>. **This course is part of your training.**
4. Applicants may also purchase a hard copy of the NPA and Rules and Regulations by contacting the Texas Board of Nursing.
5. The examination is a maximum of two hours in length. If the applicant is not successful in passing the examination, they may take the examination again after seven working days have elapsed from the previous attempt. The cost of the jurisprudence examination is included in the \$139 examination fee.

### **Licensure Procedures**

1. All students must have met all courses and clinical requirements, and have met the requirement for clinical hours, and be absolved of all financial and library matters before the director affidavit is submitted to the Board of Nursing. Students must follow the TBON process for application.
2. **Applicants should begin the application process 90-120 days prior to your anticipated graduation unless there is an eligibility issue.** Please contact program director for
3. There are two methods for an applicant to apply to the TBON to take the NCLEX-PN® through the State of Texas: 1) Online or 2) Paper. Answers to some general question regarding the process are located at the TBON website at [www.bon.state.tx.us](http://www.bon.state.tx.us).
4. If an applicant needs to answer yes to any of the eligibility questions, they cannot apply online and must follow the instructions to apply by paper. If you are a graduate outside the United States and do not have a US social security number, you will need to apply by paper and follow the instructions for international graduates (see number 6 below).
5. Complete the online application.
6. The BON requires all applicants to have a criminal background check (CBC). The CBC is processed by the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).  
**For applicants living in Texas**, L-1 Identity Solutions, [www.L1id.com](http://www.L1id.com) (formerly known as Identix), offers Live Scan locations in Texas. In order to be eligible for an electronic

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fingerprint submission, allow three business days to elapse before scheduling an appointment with L-1 Identity Solutions. You may schedule an appointment online or by phone at 1-888-467-2080. See the boards website if you reside outside of the United States.

7. **Thirty days prior to graduation, register with Pearson/Vue (third party vendor who administers the exam) at [www.vue.com/nclex](http://www.vue.com/nclex).**
8. Upon completing all graduation requirements the school will mail an affidavit of graduation directly to the BON.
9. Upon receipt of your application, criminal background check and affidavit of graduation, the BON will access the registration system of Pearson/Vue to see if you have registered to take the exam. If you have registered with Pearson/Vue, the BON will deem you eligible to take the NCLEX. Upon deeming you eligible to take the NCLEX, you will receive email verification from Pearson/Vue giving you the authorization to test (ATT) and instructions on scheduling the test. **Upon receiving the ATT, you will have 75 days to take the exam. If eligible for a graduate vocational nurse (GVN) permit, the permit will be posted online within five working days of deeming you eligible to take the exam.**
10. Take the exam. The BON will receive your results from Pearson/Vue within five working days after you take your test.
11. All applicants must pass the Texas nursing jurisprudence examination prior to being issued a permanent license. The nursing jurisprudence examination has no affect on taking the NCLEX. It is a separate requirement and only affects the ability to receive a permanent license.
12. Upon successfully passing the NCLEX and the nursing jurisprudence examination, applicants will receive a certificate. To access the nursing license go to the agency website at [www.bon.state.tx.us](http://www.bon.state.tx.us) and complete an online verification. A copy the verification as proof of licensure. If applicants are unsuccessful on the NCLEX, they will receive a diagnostic profile providing feedback on exam performance.
13. The examination fee is \$200.00.

### **Parking/Transportation**

Students are responsible for purchasing parking permits when they register. Parking permits for fall, spring and summer are subject to the current rate. Students are to park in designated areas assigned to students. Students are responsible for their own reliable transportation to and from class, as well as to and from clinical settings.

### **Physical Requirements Include:**

Requires an average of one (1) hour of intermittent sitting; four (4) hours of intermittent standing and three (3) hours of intermittent walking in an average eight (8) hour work period. Squatting, bending, kneeling, reaching, and twisting are frequently required fifty percent (50%) of the time along with an occasional need for ladder climbing, exposure to changes in temperature and humidity; exposure to dust, fumes, or gases. To be able to frequently lift/carry up to fifty (50) pounds and to push/pull up to one hundred (100) pounds is required. Hands are used for power gripping, speed and precision work. Potential exposure to contagious diseases/toxic substances requires strict adherence to standard precautions and maintenance of current immunization status.

### **Pregnant Nursing Students**

**Pregnant students must be able to meet all program objectives including attendance and if necessary provide a doctor's notification of ability to continue in program. If restrictions are**

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identified in which the student's ability to meet all program objectives can't be accomplished refer to catastrophic illness policy.

### **Professional Liability Insurance**

The College requires professional liability insurance coverage for all nursing students in the Vocational Nursing Program. Payment for insurance coverage is made at the time of registration. Insurance is charged only once a year so please check your statement of charges every semester thereafter to insure that you are not charged for insurance again

### **SAP Policy**

Refer to the college SAP website for further guide.

### **Statement of Non-Discrimination**

The Vocational Nursing Program upholds the College Policy relating to discrimination: "To the extent provided by applicable law no person shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits, or be subject to discrimination under, any program or activity sponsored by or conducted by Texas Southmost College on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, veteran status, or disability."

### **Statement on Disabilities**

Students, with disabilities, including learning disabilities, who wish to request academic adjustments to a class, should notify the Disability Services Office early in the semester so that the appropriate accommodations may be made. In accordance with federal law, a student requesting academic adjustments must provide documentation of his/her disability to the Disability Services counselor. For more information, call or visit the Counseling Center. At the time student applies for Licensure student must also notify the Texas Board of Nursing of the same needs.

Students with disabilities must meet program objectives without major or unreasonable accommodation to the school or practicum setting. An applicant would be considered ineligible to participate when his/her physical, emotional, and/or intellectual disability:

- Prohibits the student from achieving the knowledge and/or manipulative skills required of the Student Vocational Nurse.
- Creates a potential hazard to the student and/or recipient of health care services, faculty or other student.

### **Re-Admissions Policy**

*Students wishing readmission into the program must:*

1. Have been properly dis-enrolled from both the program and the College.  
\*Follow dis-enrollment Procedure.
2. Meet college re-admission requirements. (Available at the Registrar's Office)
3. Dis-enrollment for medical or family emergency will be considered on an individual basis.
4. Submit a letter to the Director of the Program stating why this re-admission will be Successful, by the date stated at exit interview.

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- a. Re-entry must be no later than six (6) months from withdrawal date; otherwise student must start at the beginning.
5. A special re-admissions committee will determine **final eligibility** and the availability of space.
6. **Any student that withdraws, or fails a course/clinical and requests readmission, will be required to repeat all courses.** Other stipulations may be applied for readmission. It is strongly recommended that students audit classes of that semester in which they were not successful.
7. **No Re-Admission to VN program is guaranteed. Only on the initial admission during the June 1 or November 1 admission are positions assured. Any other Re-Admission is based on availability of space and recommendation by faculty**
8. **Readmission will be granted one time only**, based on recommendation of admission committee and availability of space, or on an individual basis as deemed by VN Director.
9. Students returning to Level I, must go through the selection process with applicants of that level.

## Selection Process

1. All students who meet the minimum requirements are admitted into the program unless the number of applicants exceeds the spaces available.
2. In the event that applicants exceed spaces available, students must go through a competitive selection process.
3. That competitive selection process involves a personal interview and record review by an admission committee.
4. The students GPA, # of credit hours, Pre entrance Test scores, and other pertinent information is considered by each member of the committee.
5. Students remain anonymous to the admissions committee.
6. Neither the faculty nor the program director act as members of the admission committee in the selection of students. The program director oversees the process.
7. Individual members are asked to recommend students according to their personal indicators for program success. (see guidelines for VN Admission Committee instruction sheet)
8. All students' scores are compiled. Students are ranked from highest accumulated score to lowest.
9. The students with highest scores are chosen in descending order until positions are filled. Four alternates are also chosen.
10. Students are notified by mail of their conditional acceptance into the program.

## Student Responsibility

Students are expected to inform themselves thoroughly about the regulations of the College and the course requirements for degrees and to inquire in case of doubt. It will not be the College's responsibility if complaints arise because of student's failure to follow regulations and requirements. Students should become familiar with all of the programs regulated information contained in the College catalog, applicable publications and all program student guides.

Regulations will not be waived nor exceptions to requirements made on a plea of ignorance of the regulation or requirement. Request to waive regulations and/or requirements should be

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directed in writing to the Vocational Nursing Program Director who will forward the request to the appropriate Dean. The Dean will notify the student of the decision pertaining to the request.

Students are responsible to the Vocational Nursing Program Director and appropriate Dean of Health Care Career and Technical Division. Each student, by registering, enters a school or college, and, except as to conduct, is thereafter under jurisdiction of the Dean. This placement includes jurisdiction over students' program of study and degree requirements.

### **Students Called to Active Duty**

If a student withdraws from an institution of higher education because the student is called to active military service, the institution, at the student's option, shall:

1. refund the tuition and fees paid by the student for the semester in which the student withdraws;
2. grant a student, who is eligible under the institution's guidelines, an incomplete grade in all courses by designating "withdrawn-military" on the student's transcript;
3. As determined by the instructor, assign an appropriate final grade or credit to a student who has satisfactorily completed a substantial amount of coursework and who has demonstrated sufficient mastery of the course material.

In the Vocational Nursing Program an incomplete will be given and the transcript will reflect "withdrawn-military". The student will be allowed to come back and retake the semester to complete grade and continue in the VN Program. Re-mediation may be necessary if military leave is greater than one year. An individual plan will be implemented based on student need.

### **Student Employment**

Because the Vocational Nursing Program is in itself a full-time commitment, **the student is advised against employment.** Success for the student in Vocational Nursing may become seriously jeopardized, if full attention cannot be devoted to learning responsibilities. **The Vocational Nursing Program strongly discourages working while in the program!**

The student who chooses to become employed is not allowed to:

1. Wear school uniform while working.
2. Perform skills or accept responsibilities he/she is permitted to practice as a student Vocational Nurse.

It is important that the student understand that neither the College nor the faculty are liable for any harmful act that results from the students gainful employment.

### **Telephone, Voice and Digital Pager Policy**

1. Students in class or on duty are not to be contacted or visited for personal business. Incoming calls to students are discouraged. In case of an emergency, the caller should contact the school office and a message will be delivered to the student.
2. Students should not use the telephone in the clinical area for personal calls. Such calls should be handled on a pay phone located in hospital lobby, during lunch or instructor designated breaks ONLY.

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3. If cellular phones are brought to class they must be turned off. Students are to refrain from using cell phones during clinical hours this is a serious HIPAA violation if you are caught with a phone with a camera in it. Don't bring your cell phone to clinical.

### **Tech Prep.**

Students that have satisfactorily completed the Texas State approved WECM courses (Tech prep) in high school will be given credit for the courses. Transcripts are evaluated by the admissions office. High School transcript must show graduation date and be coded correctly for appropriate credit to be given. Once credit is given by the admissions office, the articulated course will appear on student's transcript as transfer in credits. This process should be completed prior to application deadline.

### **Transfer of College Credit**

Students who have successfully achieved a course at the university academic level with a grade of B will receive credit for the course/courses that are identifiable as an equivalent curriculum course in the Vocational Nursing Program.

Transfer of nursing courses from other Universities that have the same VNSG course numbers with a grade of B or higher and no longer than 2 years, will be accepted for credit. The student will be required to audit these courses.

It is important that the student requesting credit transfer for any other academic course/courses, understands that the credit will be granted upon this program's determination that the content of the academic college course is distinctly described to encompass content in a comparable vocational nursing curriculum course. The College Catalog contains additional information regarding the resolution of transfer disputes. It is also important to have the student understand all pre-requisites must be met to be eligibility into the Vocational Nursing Program.

An appointment with the Director of the Program is required to confirm and review that all requirements have been met.

### **Textbook and Supplies**

TSC is a fully digital college, and therefore e-books for the Vocational Nursing Program will be provided by Pearson Company. It is a complete digital learning system and therefore all students are required to have a laptop and to bring that to classes. **All forms and communication will be obtained in this digital format.** Some forms will have to be printed for use in the clinical setting, and the student is responsible for having the correct forms printed at the start of the clinical day. If a digital copy of your text books is not available, you will be given the ISBN number and where you can purchase them.

## Withdrawal Policy

### Voluntary Withdrawal

The student may initiate withdrawal from the Vocational Nursing Program anytime during the semester prior to the TSC official withdrawal date. Students who do not withdraw by the official withdrawal date will receive a performance grade (A, B, C, or F) according to their progress in the course.

Any Student wanting to withdraw from the Vocational Nursing Program must:

1. Follow the withdrawal procedure.
2. Failure to follow this process will seriously compromise consideration for re-admission.
3. Any student not completing this process will be ineligible to re-enter the Program.

## Withdrawal Policy

### Administrative Withdrawal / Probation

A student can be administratively withdrawn or placed on probation at any time during this nursing program for the following reasons **(but not limited to):**

1. Failure to comply with the rules and regulations as stated in this guide and TSC Catalog.
2. **Absences or tardiness** that exceeds the days allowed in the attendance policy.
3. **Failure to achieve the required average of 75 in any course and/or failure to meet the objectives and requirements of that course**, as stated in the individual course syllabi.
4. **Failure to achieve passing caliber on clinical evaluations as described in the student guide.**
5. Insubordination or failure to comply with hospital policies, including discourteous conduct to the public, patients, physicians, instructors **or other students**.
6. Dishonesty including, but not limited, to theft, cheating, misrepresentation on applications, test, or hospital records (by commission or omission).
7. Possession or abuse of alcoholic beverages, narcotics (or abused substances), or any degree of intoxication on the premises, of the College or any health care facility, or conviction of a misdemeanor involving either.
8. Participation in or being present at gambling activities on premises of the College or any health care facility.
9. Non-payment of tuition and fees.
10. A student has demonstrated performance conduct that has jeopardized or potentially jeopardized the health or safety of a patient. (See unsafe clinical or unprofessional conduct)
11. **All students are required to take a Medication Calculations Test at the beginning of every semester prior to the clinical component. Any student, who does not make**

**100% (after the 3<sup>rd</sup> attempt) on the Medication Calculations test, is considered to have failed that clinical component and will be dis-enrolled from the VN program.**

- Probationary status & conditions will be established on an individual basis after meeting with faculty & director.

## **Withdrawal Procedure**

### Voluntary withdrawal:

1. Notify course faculty and Program Director of intent to withdraw.
2. Schedule and attend withdrawal exit interview with Program Director.
3. Students may voluntarily withdraw at anytime during the semester but are encouraged to withdraw prior to the University withdrawal date deadline at enrollment office. (Refer to the University calendar)
4. Return copy of withdrawal slip to the Program Director.
5. Student will receive copy of the statement of withdrawal.

### Administrative withdrawal:

1. Student will be notified by the Program Director of administrative withdrawal.
2. Schedule and attend withdrawal exit interview with Program Director.
3. If the student is administratively withdrawn prior to the college withdrawal deadline, the student should withdraw themselves from course work at enrollment office. Failure to do so can greatly compromise the students GPA.
4. Return copy of withdrawal slip to the Program Director.
5. If the student is administratively withdrawn after the college withdrawal deadline, the student is unable to withdraw from classes therefore the GPA will be adversely affected.
6. Student will receive copy of the statement of withdrawal.



# Clinical Policies and Processes

Fall 2018

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### **Attire for special days and obtaining patient information prior to clinical**

On days when the school uniform is not required, attire should reflect a professional and businesslike status. Jeans, shorts, low cut blouses or muscle shirts, skirts 2 inches or higher above the knee, open toed sandals or shoes are NOT considered appropriate attire. Pressed (ironed) lab coat is required for all visits to the hospital including VISIBLE student name tag. Refer to grooming guidelines when selecting patients. See pages 33-34. Student name badges are required while at the ITECC.

### **Body Fluid Exposure**

#### **Policy**

If, in the course of a clinical or field assignment, a student has a parenteral (e.g. needle stick or cut) or mucous membrane (e.g., splash to the eye or mouth) exposure to blood or other body fluids or has a cutaneous exposure involving large amounts of blood or prolonged contact with blood (especially when the exposed skin is chapped, abraded or afflicted with dermatitis) the employee exposure procedure of the hospital/facility/agency at which the student received the exposure is followed. In addition to the hospital/facility/agency exposure procedure, the following steps will be taken.

#### **Procedure**

1. The student must notify the instructor or site supervisor immediately following the incident.
2. The faculty member or on site supervisor will notify the appropriate hospital/facility/agency or staff person.
3. The instructor will notify the Program Director as soon as possible. In turn the Director will notify the Dean of the Health Care Career and Technical Division.
4. The student will be counseled by the Program Director regarding the risk of possible infection as soon as possible.
5. The student will be referred to his or her private physician and/or the Nurse Practitioner at the Student Health Services Office on campus.

### **Clinical Grading**

Each student will be given progress report by their clinical instructor. These progress reports will be used to help the student and faculty gauge a student's progress. Areas for improvement will be addressed and areas of strengths will also be mentioned. At the end of each semester, each student will receive a written clinical evaluation by the instructor. The student's performance will be graded on a pass or fail basis. If the student demonstrates unsatisfactory clinical skills the student will fail the clinical course and be dis-enrolled from the program. The student will be evaluated according to:

1. Demonstration of satisfactory performance in all clinical objectives.  
This includes both behavioral and written objectives.
2. Completion of all written work on time in an organized manner with satisfactory Content. Any and all instructor comments for improvement will show corrections.
3. The satisfactory use of knowledge, skills, judgment and understanding in Delivering safe nursing care.

Clinical performance evaluations occur at the termination of each clinical course.

**LEVEL I**

Clinical I A- Basic Nursing Skills

Clinical 1B- Gerontology

**LEVEL II**

Clinical II- Maternal-Neonatal Nursing

Clinical III- Pediatrics

Clinical IV- Medical Surgical Nursing I

**LEVEL III**

Clinical V-Medical Surgical Nursing II

Additionally each Clinical has specific requirements and objectives that must be met in order to receive a satisfactory clinical evaluation.

Any student who has achieved the required scholastic average, but has failed to satisfactorily meet the clinical requirements and objectives will fail clinical rotation and be administratively withdrawn. If the clinical is a concurrent course both the classroom course and corresponding clinical will need to be repeated.

**Professional Appearance Policy**

Projecting a professional appearance is the responsibility of all students. Appearance reflects upon the individual, the Vocational Nursing Program and the University as well as the nursing profession. Patients have the right to expect clean, pressed clothes or uniform in good repair. The uniform should only be worn while complying with academic requirements. The uniform is designated by the school and students should be expected to abide by the following guidelines. Students are prohibited from altering uniform.

**FEMALES**

Designated uniform: White top, blue bottom.

Standard white nursing shoes with closed toe.  
Only completely white leather tennis shoes that can be cleaned and polished will be accepted.

All white undergarments, including all white T-shirt, no print of any kind.

White pantyhose while wearing dress.  
White knee highs or white pantyhose/  
White socks while wearing pants.

Name badge on left collar lapel.

Clinical accessories such as scissors,  
stethoscope, pen (black ink), pen light,  
Watch with second hand.

**MALES**

Same

Same

Same

White socks

Same

Same

## Grooming Guidelines

- **Hair**

Hair must be neatly groomed, above the collar and away from the face to be in compliance with Infection Control standards. Hair barrettes should be of color compatible to the hair color. Ribbons, scarves, headbands, and colored barrettes are not acceptable. **No facial hair allowed for male students. Male students are expected to come clean shaven everyday to enhance infection control standards. Male students who report to class or didactic unshaven, will be sent home to shave and will be allowed to return clean shaven.**

- **Jewelry**

No jewelry is to be worn while in clinical uniform. This is inclusive but not limited to visible body piercing. **Female students can wear earrings, as long as the earrings are studs, in the earlobes only. Only one pair of earrings is acceptable. No hanging ensembles are allowed.**

- **Fingernails**

No fingernail polish. Fingernails are not to exceed the tip of the fingers in length. **NO ARTIFICIAL NAILS OR GEL NAILS ARE ALLOWED!** Clean hands and nails are always expected in nursing.

- **Gum Chewing**

Gum chewing not only looks unprofessional, but interferes with clear communication and can be extremely offensive to others. Gum chewing will NOT be allowed while in uniform or scrub attire on hospital/school premises.

- **Hygiene**

Good oral hygiene and clean bodies, free of odor, are essential. Cosmetics should be applied discreetly to look natural. No perfume.

- **Tattoos**

Any visible body art must be covered.

## Clinical Experience

The student's clinical experience is planned to provide the opportunity to develop nursing skills, as well as to assess, organize, implement, and evaluate patient care. In order for the clinical experience to be both beneficial to the student and safe for the patient, the following guidelines have been established.

### Patient Care and Procedures

1. The student should have received theoretical knowledge of a procedure prior to performing that procedure in the clinical area and be supervised until checked off to perform the procedure satisfactorily.
2. The student is responsible for performing procedures as taught in the Program.
3. Skills checklist will be given to each student in conjunction with clinical rotations. The student is responsible for using Skills Checklist as directed, and it must be carried to clinical at all times. It is required that this checklist be completed and turned in for permanent file before graduation.

4. Students are directly responsible to the clinical instructor or designated supervisor and Will seek their supervision or advice as the situation indicates.
5. Students will never administer medication except under direct supervision of a clinical instructor.

### **Communication**

1. The student will report to the instructor or designated supervisor before leaving the unit For any reason.
2. Students are not to answer the telephone while in the clinical area.
3. Students do not take any orders or receive any kind of report on patients either verbally or via telephone. A qualified staff member should be sought for this function.
4. Any documentation of information by the student in the permanent record must be checked by the instructor first and then transcribed to the permanent chart accompanied by the appropriate signature. (First Name, Last Name and Title=SVN)
5. It is the responsibility of the student to keep the clinical instructor or Designated supervisor informed of the assigned patient's progress and follow through as directed.
6. Students will not witness permits or any legal document related to patient care.
7. Clinical conference will provide the student with an opportunity to discuss areas of need.
8. Students may not sleep or rest with head down during clinical or class.

### **Confidentiality**

Students are reminded that any and all information about any patient's condition is confidential and should not be discussed in ANY public area inside or outside the hospital.

### **Communicable Disease Policy**

A safe environment must be maintained for all students and patients. The student with a communicable disease must report the condition to his/her immediate supervisor or director as soon as possible.

### **General Guidelines**

1. The Vocational Nursing Program will make information on the prevention of communicable diseases available to students.
2. All reasonable precautions will be taken to protect confidentiality. However, communicable diseases will be reported as applicable to appropriate authorities.
3. A student with a communicable disease may attend classes or perform duties at the clinical site if his or her presence does not pose a threat or danger to that individual, others in the University, or patients they will be in contact with during the clinical experience.
4. Students MUST follow the affiliates' guidelines governing caring for patients with Communicable diseases at all times.

### **Emergency Health Care**

Nursing students are responsible for their own health and medical expenses. It is recommended that each student carry health insurance.

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### **Hospital wide Orientation**

All new Vocational Nursing students are required to attend a Valley Wide Hospital Orientation. This Orientation is mandatory and must be completed before participating in any clinical experience.

### **Immunization**

All required immunizations are required prior to admission. Proof of flu shot and TB test must be brought to the department prior to the start of the semester. A student who is not compliant with this policy will not be allowed in clinical.

### **Occupational Exposure to Infectious Agents**

In accordance with the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regulations, students will receive information regarding Blood Borne pathogen prevention measures. Students are encouraged to take the Hepatitis B Vaccine Series offered at nominal cost through Express Occupational. The opportunity to begin the series will be available throughout the school year.

### **Professional Risk**

#### **Reporting Injury**

Any nursing student injured while functioning as a student nurse must report to his/her instructor (i.e., needle stick). An incident report should be completed according to the facilities procedure. A copy of the report filed must be sent to the Program Director.

#### **Reporting Unprepared**

A student will be considered unprepared if he/she is not in compliance with designated dress code or lacks required written nursing care plan, and/or other required assignments or materials. A student reporting unprepared will be given up to 30 minutes to prepare. If adequate clinical preparation is accomplished in 30 minutes, a tardy will be assessed and the student permitted to participate in the clinical experience for that day. If adequate preparation cannot be accomplished within the 30 minutes, the student is sent home and an absence is assessed.

### **Smoking**

Valley Baptist Medical Center at Brownsville, Valley Regional Medical, and Harlingen Medical Center are NON-SMOKING hospitals. No smoking is permitted on hospital grounds. **Students are not permitted to smoke while wearing program uniforms, while at clinical or in class.**

### **Universal Precautions**

All students are to follow universal precautionary measures (blood and body fluid precautions), in the clinical area, for protection of themselves and patients as outlined in the current Center for Disease Control Guidelines. OSHA Category I

### **Use of Hospital Photocopiers**

Students should refrain from using clinical facilities photocopiers to make copies.

### **Unsafe Clinical Practice and Unprofessional Conduct**

**Texas Southmost College Vocational Nursing Program identifies safety as a basic health need. Safety needs can be identified as physical, biological and emotional. Safe practices are an academic requirement of this program.**

## Student Handbook: 2018

The faculty believes that in every nursing action the primary concern of the nurse is the safety of the Patient and all other individuals involved. Therefore, safety is emphasized throughout the program.

Unsafe clinical practice shall be deemed to be behaviors demonstrated by the student which threaten or violate the physical, biological or emotional safety of the Patient(s) assigned to his/her care. The following examples serve as guides to these unsafe behaviors, but are not to be considered all inclusive.

### Physical Safety

Unsafe behaviors (include but are not limited to): inappropriate use of side rails, wheelchairs, other mechanical equipment; lack of proper protection of the Patient which potentiates falls, lacerations, burns; abandonment of patient assignment.

### Biological Safety

Unsafe behaviors (include but are not limited to): failure to recognize violations in aseptic technique, violates "6 rights" in medication administration, comes to clinical unwell, performs nursing actions without appropriate supervision, fails to seek help when needed.

### Emotional Safety

Unsafe behaviors (include but are not limited to): threatens or makes Patient fearful, provides Patient with inappropriate or incorrect information, performs nursing actions without appropriate supervision, fails to seek help when needed, demonstrates unstable emotional behaviors.



- **Texas Southmost College**

- **VOCATIONAL NURSING PROGRAM**

- **Signature Sheet**

This is to certify that a Vocational Nursing Program Guide has been issued to me,

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name

I have read the guide and the director of the Vocational Nursing Program has provided instruction and discussion of the information that I may understand what my responsibilities are while enrolled in the program. In the event that I fail to meet the policies of this program, my withdrawal will be required.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Witnessed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Informed Consent

I, \_\_\_\_\_, consent to my name being placed on such papers as are necessary for class schedules, clinical assignments and experience rotation schedules. I understand that these papers will be posted in designated clinical experience areas and in the Vocational Nursing Program College facility. Records of my progress will be protected under the right to privacy and will not be posted.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Texas Southmost College**

**VOCATIONAL NURSING PROGRAM**

I do hereby understand, agree to and will comply with the student policies as given and explained to me. Furthermore, I will agree to and will comply with the course requirements as listed in Syllabi, Student Policies and Program Guide of the Vocational Nursing Program.

I understand that my behavior may be reviewed by the Vocational Nursing Faculty and Staff.

It is my understanding that if I feel I cannot adhere to these policies because of my personal beliefs, I will withdraw myself or decline my position as a student Vocational nurse at Texas Southmost College.

I have read and understand the questions that I will be required to answer on my application for licensure.

---

Printed Name

---

Student Signature

---

Date

**The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA)**

Took effect in 2003, established the duty of the health care provider to protect the confidentiality of all health information. Health care providers who maintain and transmit health care information must provide reasonable and appropriate administrative, technical, and physical safeguards on a patient's health information. The law sets rules and limits on who has permission to look at and receive health information. All health care providers must be knowledgeable about the HIPAA standards and protect the privacy rights of patients and residents.

I \_\_\_\_\_, have read and understand  
The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 196 (HIPAA) and will comply with  
all aspects of this law.

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_